Cuban Ex-Navy Officials Held; Plot Charged

HAVANA, Cuba (AP)—The Cuban navy said Saturday night nine of its retired officials and one naval non-com have been arrested. They are accused of plotting armed rebellion against the government of President Batista.

FULGENCIO BATISTA

The 10, including a former navy chief and his two top aids, were jailed in the military prison in the Cuban fortress at the entry of Havana Harbor.

The announcement followed the arrest of four men and seizure of arms at Mamaroneck, N.Y., in a reported plot to stage a "Christmas revolt" against the Cuban government.

The sheriff of Westchester County, New York, said one of the men arrested there, a munitions dealer, said the arms cache was being built up for Cuba's ex-president Carlos Prio Socarras. Prio was ousted by Batista in a coup last March 10 and now lives in Miami.

DENIES KNOWLEDGE

Among the former navy men arrested in Havana, the navy said, were: Capt. Jose Aguila Ruiz, former chief of the navy; Commodore Alberto Casanova, former second chief; and Capt. Marcos Perez Medina, former third chief.

Announcement of the arrests was made by RearAdm. Jose Rodriguez Calderon, chief of the navy, in a formal statement to the press.

In Miami Prio Socarras said he had no knowledge of any revolutionary plot against Batista and that he did not know the men arrested in Mamaroneck. The Westchester munitions dealer was identified as Alfred Mannheim, 29. Police are seeking a fifth man there.

U.S. PROBING MATTER

In Washington, the State Department said government agencies were following the matter closely to determine whether there were any federal law violations. A department press officer said particular attention was being focused on possible Neutrality Act violations.

Arrested besides Mannheim, a New Yorker, were Frank Connell, 49, of Brooklyn; Jose Duarte, 35, of Yonkers, N.Y., and William J. Wood, 45, of Staten Island.

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$240,000 Theft Bares Plot On Cuban Dictator

FORT WORTH, Tex. (UP)—A plot against Cuban dictator Fulgencio Batista was disclosed Saturday when three Cuban gun-runners told police two men had robbed them of $240,000 they had planned to spend for guns and ammunition.

The Cubans said the money had been given them in $100 bills by Carlos Prio Socarras, deposed Cuban president, who was in New York City living at a fashionable hotel. He was not available for comment on the reported plot.

EX-CONVICT ACCUSED

One suspect, Orville Lindsey Chambless, 35, recently released from an Oklahoma penitentiary, was charged in Justice of the Peace Court with robbery by assault, but has not been arrested.

A second suspect, Sam Brown Cresap, Fort Worth used car salesman, labeled by police as "contact man" in the case, was charged with transporting $240,000 across the Texas line into Oklahoma. He is under arrest and was denied bond but U.S. Atty. Frank Potter said he would recommend a $50,000 bond when another hearing is held for Cresap Monday.

Two of the robbery victims, Candida De La Torres and Manuel Fernandez Madariaga, first said they had lost only $8,000 to the robbers. Later, they admitted that $240,000 was stolen in the holdup, in a cabana at the swanky Western Hills Hotel.

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GIVE DETAILED ACCOUNT

The two men, a third Cuban, Jose Duarte of Havana, and the suspected salesman gave a detailed account of the bizarre robbery. Federal Bureau of Investigation agents were reported keeping top Washington officials informed of developments.

A detective working on the case said De La Torres and Madariaga had admitted being agents of the recently deposed Cuban republican government.

Police said the Cubans were lured to the United States from Mexico by a group of confidence men who posed as munitions suppliers and then robbed them. The robbery apparently was planned at first to take place at Houston's Shamrock Hotel. The locale was switched to the Western Hills Hotel because cabanas there offered more privacy, police said.

file
Munitions Dealers - Cuban